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PROVISIONAL SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 60th MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Tuesday, 12 December 1995, at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. KAMAL (Pakistan)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.45 a.m.

COORDINATION OF THE POLICIES AND ACTIVITIES OF THE SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND OTHER BODIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM RELATED TO THE FOLLOWING THEME (continued)

(a) COORDINATED FOLLOW-UP BY THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RESULTS OF THE MAJOR INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCES ORGANIZED BY THE UNITED NATIONS IN THE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND RELATED FIELDS (continued) (E/1995/129, E/1995/125)

The PRESIDENT drew attention to the Note by the Secretary-General on possible common themes for the follow-up of major international conferences at the coordination segment of the substantive session of the Economic and Social Council in 1996 (E/1995/129), particularly paragraphs 2 and 5 thereof.

The informal consultations which had taken place on that topic had led to the identification of the following theme which the Council would address during the coordination segment of the substantive session of the Economic and Social Council in 1996: "coordination of the United Nations system activities for poverty eradication which should focus on three areas: Coordination of the United Nations support for and availability of resources to the United Nations system for facilitating national poverty eradication plans and programmes as well as the provision of basic social services, particularly at the field level; coordination of United Nations efforts to ensure that all its activities for poverty eradication take fully into account the gender perspective; and ways of monitoring United Nations performance in the field of poverty eradication, in the context of the harmonization of the multi-year programmes of work of the functional commissions, as contained in the thirteenth paragraph of the Council's Agreed Conclusions (1995/1)".

He took it that the Council wished to adopt that theme.

It was so decided.

Mr. STOBY (Director for Policy Coordination and ECOSOC Affairs) said that the Council had placed a heavy burden on the Secretary-General in terms of the work needed to prepare the report to support the Council's consideration of

that theme. Members would be aware that the Council would be taking a decision in which it would suggest a poverty-related theme for the Commission for Social Development. In the context of the work of the Second Committee, the Secretary-General would produce a report in 1996 concerning the implementation of the programme of action on the United Nations decade for the eradication of poverty.

During the next six months, efforts would be made to find a way of integrating reporting systems to the Council and to see whether a more consolidated type of report could be produced. He hoped that the Council, at its coordinating session in February 1996, would give serious thought to the Secretary-General's proposal that the coordinated themes for 1996 should include a poverty-related and an agenda-related theme.

The PRESIDENT said that he took it that the Council wished, at its organizational session in February 1996, to allocate a number of meetings within the general segment of its 1996 substantive session to determining how to ensure the harmonization and coordination of the agendas and multi-year working programmes of the functional commissions, as set out in the thirteenth paragraph of its agreed conclusions 1995/1.

World Trade Organization

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT drew attention to the exchange of letters contained in document E/1995/125 between the Director-General of the World Trade Organization and the Secretary-General of the United Nations. He took it that the Council wished to take note, with satisfaction, of the exchange of letters and of the recommendation contained therein that current arrangements governing the status of the International Trade Centre as a joint body should be confirmed and renewed with the World Trade Organization; the Centre's name would accordingly become International Trade Centre UNCTAD/WTO.

It was so decided.

SOCIAL, HUMANITARIAN AND HUMAN RIGHTS QUESTIONS: REPORTS OF SUBSIDIARY BODIES, CONFERENCES AND RELATED QUESTIONS (continued)

(e) ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN (continued) (A/50/747-E/1995/126, A/50/785-E/1995/128)

The PRESIDENT drew attention to a Note by the Secretariat, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 49/160, concerning the proposed merger of the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of

Women (INSTRAW) with the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) (A/50/747-E/1995/126), and to the relevant report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/50/785-E/1995/128).

Mrs. ALVAREZ (Observer for the Dominican Republic) said that her delegation wished to bring to the Council's attention the serious situation resulting from the Secretariat's attempts to ignore the mandates outlined in General Assembly resolutions 49/163 and 49/160; the former urged the Secretary-General to appoint a Director of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women and to fill the existing vacancies in order to permit the Institute to carry out its mandate. Almost one year later those mandates had not been implemented.

Another very serious matter was the way in which the Secretariat had chosen to deal with Member States. The whole issue of the proposed merger had been handled by means of manoeuvres, the latest being the submission by the Secretariat of a note instead of the report requested in General Assembly resolution 49/160. Her delegation was deeply concerned that the Secretariat had not complied with mandates given to it by the General Assembly.

Mr. STOBY (Director for Policy Coordination and ECOSOC Affairs) said that he was not in a position to accept that the staff of the United Nations had engaged in manoeuvres, or had failed to comply with mandates given by the Member States in respect of the matter under discussion.

The PRESIDENT said that he took it that the Council wished to take note of the Note by the Secretariat (A/50/747-E/1995/126) and the report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (A/50/785-E/1995/128) and to refer them to the General Assembly for consideration.

It was so decided.

(f) SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT QUESTIONS (continued)

Mr. TEJERA-PARÍS (Venezuela), Vice-President, reporting on the informal consultations on the substantive theme to be considered by the Commission for Social Development at its special session, said that agreement had been reached on the theme "Strategies and actions for the eradication of poverty: (a) formulation of integrated strategies; (b) meeting basic human needs of all; and (c) promotion of self-reliance and community-based initiatives" and that the dates for the special session of the Commission would be 21-30 May 1996.

The PRESIDENT said that he took it that the Council wished to adopt that proposal.

It was so decided.

ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL QUESTIONS: REPORTS OF SUBSIDIARY BODIES, CONFERENCES AND RELATED QUESTIONS (continued)

(e) IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT (continued)

Mr. PAPADATOS (Greece), Vice-President, referring to Economic and Social Council resolution 1995/55 in which it had been decided to enlarge the membership of the Commission on Population and Development, said that it had been very difficult to find a single solution during the informal consultations. As Vice-President of the Council, he therefore proposed that the Council should decide to enlarge the membership of the Commission on Population and Development from 27 to 47 members and that the regional representation should be 12 members from Africa, 11 from Asia, 5 from the Eastern European group, 9 from the Latin American and Caribbean group and 10 from the Western European group.

The PRESIDENT said that he took it that the Council wished, in a spirit of compromise, to adopt that proposal.

It was so decided.

Mr. PAPADATOS (Greece), Vice-President, proposed that the Council should further decide that the members of the Commission would be elected by the Economic and Social Council from among the Members of the United Nations and members of its specialized agencies in time to take part at the twenty-ninth session of the Commission on Population and Development.

The PRESIDENT said that he took it that the Council wished to adopt that proposal.

It was so decided.

Mr. SINGH (India), noting that the Commission would be meeting in late February, asked whether the elections would take place before that time.

Mr. HOPE (United States of America) asked whether the elections would be for the entire membership or for the new seats which would come into existence as a result of the decision just adopted. His delegation had acquiesced in that decision with extreme reluctance, considering that it should have been taken within the context of a general review of the Council's subsidiary bodies.

Mr. PANKIN (Russian Federation) said that his delegation had accepted the decision, but that it should not be a precedent for the distribution of seats in other United Nations bodies.

The PRESIDENT expressed displeasure at not having been informed in advance of the proposals and their implications. It had been his understanding that the only proposal under consideration was the increase in the membership of the Commission and that further deliberations were to take place in informal consultations for the implementation of resolution 48/162. Now, however, other questions had been raised, such as when the elections should take place and whether the entire membership, or only the new members, were to be elected.

Mrs. MENENDEZ (Observer for Spain), speaking of behalf of the European Union, said that the European Union had supported the decision regarding the total number and regional distribution of members of the Commission in the interest of consensus and because of the extreme importance of the topic in view of the upcoming session of the Commission. It greatly regretted that a total membership of 47 rather than 45 members had been decided upon; while numbers might be arbitrary, compromises should not be, and she hoped that the same procedure would not be followed in the future.

Ms. JACOBSEN (Norway) said that her delegation had joined the consensus with great reluctance. It had argued for a revitalization of the Commission through reconsideration of the available expertise rather than through an increase in its membership. If that membership was to be increased, her delegation would have preferred a target number of 36 members, but it had reluctantly accepted a membership of 45 with the understanding that the composition of other Council bodies would be taken up during consultations on resolution 48/162. She therefore found it surprising that no serious consultations had taken place and hoped that the process, and its result, would not set a precedent for deliberations on other United Nations bodies.

Mrs. REBONG (Philippines) said that the Commission on Population and Development had the essential function of follow-up on the International Conference on Population and Development, which was of great importance to developing countries. The Group of 77 and China had advocated a total membership of 53 and would have preferred the Council to take into account the number of countries in each regional group. In the spirit of compromise, it had

accepted a membership of 47 and a division of that membership into five groups, but it hoped that the process would not set a precedent.

Mr. RAMOUL (Algeria) said that while his delegation had joined the consensus it was not pleased at the way in which the changes had been carried out and hoped that there would be no recurrence of the failure to take objective criteria into account. The Group of 77 had called for an increase in the membership of the Commission because it attached great importance to the issues of population and development and because it felt that rules and procedures should be respected, especially with regard to the regional distribution of membership. However, some members of the Council had acted in their own interests, and the resulting decision was politically unacceptable.

Mr. BAILLARGEON (Canada) associated his delegation with those which had objected to the nature of the decision. The question of the enlargement of the membership should have been considered in conjunction with the question of the Commission's mandate. A target membership of 45 would have been preferable; a membership of 47 reflected matters of regional representation rather than the responsibilities of the Commission.

Mr. HORIGUCHI (Japan) said that while his delegation had accepted the decision because of the importance of the population issue, the decision should not be regarded as setting a precedent. It was his delegation's understanding that elections would be held to fill only the new seats on the Commission; he wondered what the financial implications of the expansion might be.

Mr. AGONA (Uganda) said that his delegation had joined the consensus with great reluctance, especially with regard to the distribution of seats on the Commission, and hoped that no precedent would be set. He felt that the time had come to decide on acceptable principles with regard to the distribution of seats in United Nations bodies. Moreover, the recourse to private, informal discussions was not to the benefit of small delegations.

Mr. HOSNY (Egypt) said that his delegation had accepted the proposal in the spirit of compromise and in order to advance the goals of the International Conference on Population and Development.

Ms. YANG Yanyi (China) said that the membership of the Commission should reflect the principle of equitable geographical distribution; unfortunately the decision just adopted did not fully take that principle into account; in particular, she regretted the fact that not enough seats had been

allocated to regions with large populations and those which faced problems of economic development. While her delegation had accepted the decision in the spirit of compromise, it believed that the decision should not set a precedent.

Ms. KELLEY (Secretary of the Council), responding to the questions raised by various delegations, said that now that the Council had decided on the future membership of the Commission, it would be possible to prepare the programme budget implications. With regard to the scope of the elections, while there was no specific rule, it was the established practice of the Council, in such situations, to elect only the new members. The Secretariat felt that elections should be held as soon as possible given that the Commission's session was scheduled in February.

The PRESIDENT said that it was his understanding that the statement of programme budget implications was under preparation and would be taken up in the future, and that elections to fill the new seats on the Commission would be held in January. As a sovereign body, the Council could decide whether to elect all or part of the membership of the Commission. In the light of past practice, he took it that only the new members would be elected in January.

It was so decided.

(q) PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND DEVELOPMENT (continued)

The PRESIDENT said that since the consolidated report requested by the General Assembly, containing an analysis of the role of public administration in development and recommendations for strengthening the role of the United Nations in public administration and development for the benefit of interested developing countries with economies in transition and the Report of the Twelfth Meeting of Experts on the United Nations Programme in Public Administration and Finance, would not be available before the end of the current year, he took it that the Council wished to postpone consideration of the item until 1996.

It was so decided.

ELECTIONS, APPOINTMENTS, NOMINATIONS AND CONFIRMATION

Executive Board of the World Food Programme (E/1995/130)

The CHAIRMAN drew attention to the Note by the Secretariat (E/1995/130), particularly paragraph 3, and pointed out that in accordance with United Nations practice, once the membership of the Board was complete, he would draw lots to determine which members would serve for three-, two- and one-year

terms respectively. Members were to be elected from the States included in lists A to E of the report of the Committee on Food Aid Policies and Programmes on the work of its first special session (E/1995/L.11, annex II).

The Secretariat had received letters from the Chairmen of the respective regional groups endorsing the following candidates: India, Indonesia, Pakistan and the Philippines (Asian States); Hungary (Eastern European States); and Finland, Italy, Japan, Norway, Sweden and United Kingdom (Western European and other States). The Secretariat had also received a letter from the Permanent Representative of Paraguay, presenting his country's candidacy for one of the two posts allocated to the Latin American and Caribbean States group. In addition, the President had received an endorsement of the candidacies of Angola, Cameroon and Uganda from the chairman of the African group. Since the number of candidates for the African, Asian, Eastern European, Latin American and Caribbean, and Western European and other States groups were less than or equal to the number of vacancies in those groups, he took it that the Council wished to elect by acclamation the States proposed by those groups and to postpone to a later date the election of the remaining members from the African and the Latin American and Caribbean States groups.

It was so decided.

Angola, Cameroon, Finland, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Norway, Pakistan, Paraguay, Philippines, Sweden, Uganda and United Kingdom were elected members of the Executive Board of the World Food Programme.

The meeting rose at 12.05 p.m.